

Elizabeth Constable's Churchlands Newsletter



SPECIAL ELECTION EDITION

For electors in Churchlands, City Beach, Floreat, Glendalough,
Wembley, Woodlands, Wembley Downs and West Leederville

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OPEN LETTER TO VOTERS OF THE CHURCHLANDS ELECTORATE

Dear Elector

I keep asking myself this question: Why has this election been called nearly six months early?

The official reason given can't be right - that is, because there was uncertainty created by speculation about the election. There always is speculation in the media about elections but Western Australian voters have come to expect governments will run their full term.

■ Perhaps the election was called early because there is a CCC report due out that just might adversely mention government members of parliament.

■ Perhaps Labor just didn't want an election held in February after another few hot months of daylight saving.

■ Perhaps Labor didn't want an election a couple of weeks after schools return in February, facing teachers shortages again.

■ Or, perhaps Labor thought it would be smart to hide behind two weeks of the Beijing Olympics because they didn't want too much scrutiny of workforce shortages, cost overruns, hospital waiting lists, and the failure of sentencing laws giving convicted criminals an automatic sentence reduction of one third.

Many people have expressed their anger to me about what they see as a cynical and unwarranted decision of the government in calling the election so early.

As I look back over the Special Edition of the *Newsletter* from February 2005, the same state issues continue to be glaring problems today: workforce shortages – teachers, nurses, police officers; shortages in essential services; anxiety about community safety; hospital waiting lists and concerns about the environment.

I am mindful that voters have put their trust in me as an Independent at previous elections, and I will be standing in this election as an Independent again.

However, I am increasingly dismayed and worried about the stagnation and declining state of so many key government responsibilities – health, law and order, education, environmental protection, aboriginal affairs and government accountability, to name but a few. I have, therefore, decided to act on my concerns and I have accepted an invitation to join forces with the Liberals, hopefully to influence a positive change on Saturday, 6 September.

On page 2 I have highlighted a few of the pressing issues facing the State. Selected local issues – schools, environment, traffic and transport – are briefly reviewed on page 3. Election day and voting information is summarised on page 4.

During the lead up to the election I will try to catch up with as many of you as possible. Unfortunately, because the election was called at short notice time for doorknocking is very limited and I know I will miss many of you. So, please contact me if there is any issue you wish to speak to me about.

It has been my great privilege to represent the people of the Churchlands Electorate. I hope you will give me your trust again on Saturday, 6 September, so that I can continue to work with you as individuals and in your community groups, and represent you in the State Parliament

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Constable". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ELECTION 2008: STATE ISSUES

LAW AND ORDER

Safety and security in our homes and on the streets continue to be a major concern, especially for elderly people. Random aggressive and violent behaviour, the number of hoons and road rage have increased.

So-called truth in sentencing – an automatic one third reduction in sentences – was introduced by Labor in 2003. It has failed miserably. By calling the election six months early, the promised change to this bad law will now be delayed for several months until the new Parliament is convened.

A recent report from the Auditor General showed it costs \$200m every year to handle just 250 youthful offenders. Most people would probably conclude we are not getting our money's worth.

SHORTAGES

Workforce and skill shortages have plagued WA for many years. It appears the situation is likely to decline even further in the future.

These shortages are particularly evident in the public sector with an ageing workforce in the key areas of teaching, nursing and policing. As well, there is a high attrition rate among young professionals in these areas. It is not surprising they are lured into more lucrative jobs in the private sector.

While pay and working conditions have been at the heart of industrial unrest in recent months among teachers, police and other public sector workers, the centralized control of education, health and other government services has alienated many people working in government departments.

What we need, without delay, is a devolved system of management for our public service which allows each employee to be empowered and involved.

Shortages in essential services – electricity, gas, water – have also plagued Western Australia for some time.

Adequate provision of these essential services is the bread and butter of government.

Electricity outages have become common place, particularly in peak periods in the summer, indicating that the government has not been vigilant.

The split up of Western Power has proved to be an expensive exercise with a nine per cent increase in electricity bills promised for next year and more increases in the following years. Householders will be paying for poor government decision making.

The recent gas explosion on Varanus Island demonstrated the vulnerability of our gas supplies. The explosion was very costly to businesses dependent on gas and many people lost their jobs as a result.

Comprehensive long-term strategic planning of adequate, safe and reliable supplies of water, electricity and gas is a key responsibility of government and must include renewable energy sources.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Open and accountable government is fundamental to good government. In recent times the signs have not always been good –

■ A number of government ministers have found themselves embroiled in Crime and Corruption Commission investigations. ■ Reluctance of government ministers to respect the spirit of Freedom of Information legislation. ■ A government department selling lists of citizen's details to a private company. ■ Poor financial judgement of ministers has led to the huge cost overruns of the TRELIS licensing system, the Perth to Mandurah railway, the Office of Shared Services.

Some of the actions required include -

■ Legislation to register and monitor the activities of consultant lobbyists, ■ an overhaul of FOI legislation and practices and ■ the introduction of laws to protect the privacy of individuals are just three of the actions needed to improve government accountability.

ENVIRONMENT

The government has been slow to take up the challenge of renewable energy targets. In October 2006 I introduced into the Legislative Assembly the *Electricity Industry (Western Australian Renewable Energy Target) Amendment Bill 2005*. The bill was a private members bill which had passed through the Legislative Council. It was unfortunate that the Carpenter government opposed this legislation indicating a lack of will to grapple with this important environmental issue.

Long term strategic planning for environmental sustainability by government has been slow to date. Among other initiatives it should include funding for renewable energy research, incentives for industry to reduce greenhouses gasses and incentives for households, industry and agriculture to reduce water consumption.

ELECTION 2008: LOCAL ISSUES

Schools, the local environment, traffic and public transport are three standout issues among the many matters constituents have raised with me recently, and these are highlighted on this page. Long waiting lists for public housing in this area is often raised with me. Those seeking to downsize their homes want more choice in housing so they can remain close to family, friends and amenities. Despite the booming economy, the rising cost of essentials, petrol prices and cost of housing are everyone's concerns.

ENVIRONMENT

From the ocean front at City Beach and Floreat on the western boundary to Lake Monger on the eastern side, from Bold Park to the south and Herdsman Lake and Jackadder Lake on the northern boundary, the electorate of Churchlands has spectacular environmental features.

I am particularly proud of my contribution to local environmental issues, for example –

- The inclusion of the northern section of Bold Park, with its special examples of endangered flora, in the Parks Authority;
- saving the remnant bushland between Churchlands SHS and Newman College from residential development;
- and the community push to resolve the odour problem at the Subiaco Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Ongoing challenges include –

- finding a solution for the drop in the water table at Perry Lakes;
- removing the Stephenson Highway road reserve from Bold Park and the Wembley Golf Course;
- maintaining and protecting birdlife throughout the beautiful local wetlands;
- making sure the local beaches remain in their unspoiled form; and,
- the continued regeneration of Bold Park.

SCHOOLS

Government school teachers in the Churchlands electorate should be congratulated for the top job they do providing excellent education to the children in their care.

Since 1991 upwards of \$30 million has been spent on upgrades and maintenance on local schools, but there are still some urgently needed improvements to old buildings. Recently -

- The new library was completed at Woodlands PS replacing a small building paid for by parents over 40 years ago. And, after years of persistence
- Floreat PS received funding for new toilets having been told for years that other schools were in more need.

- The recent fire damage at Churchlands SHS in the administration block, will require urgent attention but will also focus on the need to complete the Music School and the serious shortage of specialist classrooms caused by increased numbers of students.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

Being close to the City of Perth, the streets of the Churchlands Electorate suffer from an ever increasing flow of traffic accessing hospitals, sport and recreational facilities, and commercial areas. The need for more regular public transport in this area and beyond is urgent.

Constituents who want to use public transport often find it is not available. Others trying to access trains to the city during morning peak hours find they are full to overflowing by the time they get to Glendalough station. Unless adequate public transport is available people will simply rely on more and more cars.

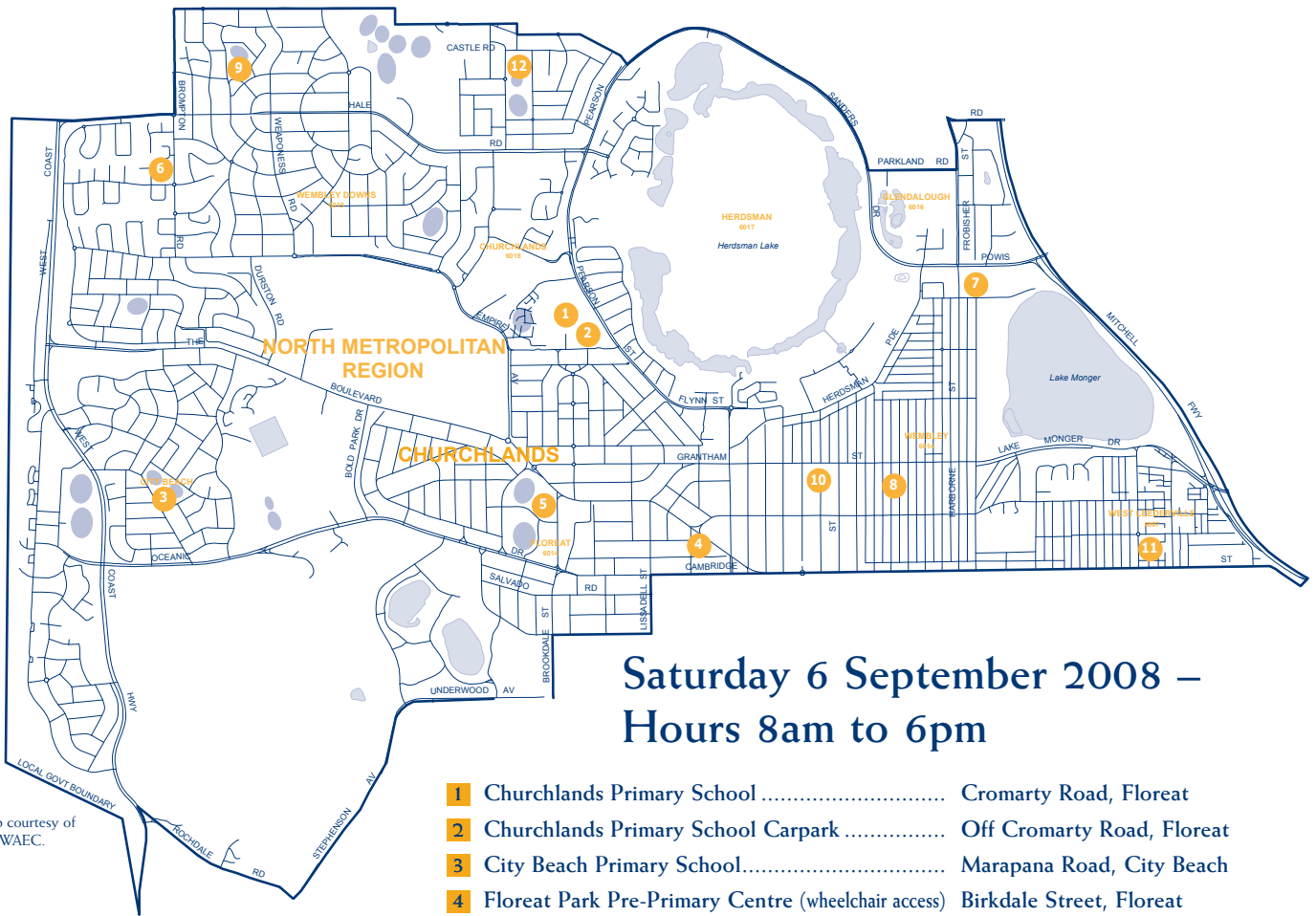
There has been a gradual recognition by government that community attitudes and values have changed. At last there is recognition that Stephenson Highway, if and when it is constructed, should respect the community view that it should not cut through the Wembley Golf Course or Bold Park.

The planned new sports stadium to replace the current Subiaco Oval will create increased pressure on local streets, particularly in West Leederville. Clearly, public transport is the answer.

ABOUT LIZ CONSTABLE

Liz Constable was educated in Sydney and moved to Perth with her husband, Ian, and two sons in 1975. Liz has worked as a teacher, psychologist, university lecturer and researcher in Australia and overseas. She has an MEd from Harvard and a PhD in Education from UWA. In the community, she is active in schools and sports clubs and has served on animal ethics, medical research, disability services, school and law education boards. In Parliament, her contributions are wide-ranging including education, child protection, community policing, environmental issues, anti-corruption measures, accountability issues and scrutiny of government spending priorities.

CHURCHLANDS POLLING BOOTHS



Map courtesy of the WAEC.

**Saturday 6 September 2008 –
Hours 8am to 6pm**

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Churchlands Primary School | Cromarty Road, Floreat |
| 2 | Churchlands Primary School Carpark | Off Cromarty Road, Floreat |
| 3 | City Beach Primary School..... | Marapana Road, City Beach |
| 4 | Floreat Park Pre-Primary Centre (wheelchair access) | Birkdale Street, Floreat |
| 5 | Floreat Park Primary School..... | Chandler Avenue, Floreat |
| 6 | Holy Spirit School..... | Brompton Road, City Beach |
| 7 | Lake Monger Primary School | Dodd Street, Wembley |
| 8 | Wembley Church of Christ | Nanson Street, Wembley |
| 9 | Wembley Downs Primary School | Bournemouth Cres, Wembley Downs |
| 10 | Wembley Primary School (wheelchair access) | Grantham Street, Wembley |
| 11 | West Leederville Primary School..... | Northwood Street, Leederville |
| 12 | Woodlands Primary School (wheelchair access) | Bentwood Avenue, Woodlands |

TRANSPORT ON ELECTION DAY:

If you require transport to a polling booth on Saturday, 6 September, please contact my re-election campaign office (Tel: 9285 8077)

POSTAL VOTES

You may apply for a Postal Vote up until Thursday 4 September or vote in person before the poll, from 19 August, at the Western Australian Electoral Commission or the Australian electoral Commission divisional Offices of Stirling or Curtin. Please contact my campaign office for assistance with postal votes. Tel: 9285 8077.

A mobile unit will be placed in the Churchlands Primary School Carpark (off Cromarty Road, Floreat) for people with a disability and others who are infirmed and find walking and standing at a booth difficult.

Liz Constable's Re-election Campaign Office

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